

**Planning & Community  
Development Department**  
1421 N Meadowwood Lane  
Suite 120  
Liberty Lake, WA 99019  
**Phone: (509) 755-6707**  
**Fax: (509) 755-6713**  
[www.cityoflibertylake.com](http://www.cityoflibertylake.com)

## **SIGNAGE STANDARDS**

### **Purpose, Intent and Scope**

The purpose and intent of this section is to enhance the visual environment of residential, commercial and industrial areas while promoting commerce, traffic safety and community identity.

The signage standards shall not regulate traffic and directional signs installed by a governmental entity or in a private parking lot where signs are not readable from nor intended to be viewed from a public right-of-way; merchandise displays, point-of-purchase advertising displays, such as product dispensers where signs are not readable from nor intended to be viewed from a public right-of-way; national flags; flags of a political subdivision; symbolic flags of an institution; legal notices required by law; barber poles; historic site monuments/plaques; gravestones; structures intended for a separate use, such as phone booths, donation and recycling containers; lettering or symbols applied directly onto or flush-mounted magnetically to a motor vehicle operating in the normal course of business; property identification signs pursuant to Chapter 3.14 of the Spokane County Code (as adopted by City of Liberty Lake, Washington).

### **General Provisions**

A permit is required for any on-premises sign that is erected, re-erected, constructed, painted, posted, applied or structurally altered. The Planning and Community Development Department shall review permit applications. In addition, building permits shall be required as specified in Title 3 of the Spokane County Code (as adopted by City of Liberty Lake, Washington).

### **Definitions**

1. Billboards: Outdoor Advertising signs containing a message, commercial or otherwise, unrelated to any use or activity of the property on which the sign is located.
2. Bulletin Board: A sign which identifies an institution or organization on the premises on which it is located and which contains the name of the institution or organization, the names of individuals connected with it, and general announcements of events or activities occurring at the institution, or similar messages.
3. Electric Sign: A sign or sign structure in which electrical wiring, connections and/or fixtures are used as part of the sign proper.
4. Electronically Changeable Message Sign: A sign upon which graphics, symbols or words can be varied upon the face or faces of a sign by a computer controller to display time, temperature, public service, community service and commercial information.
5. Flashing Sign: An electrical sign or portion thereof which changes light intensity in a brief, brilliant, or sudden and transient outburst of light causing a steady on and off, glittering, sparkling, or scintillating pattern. (This definition shall not include electronically changeable message signs or signs which simulate motion for mood lighting purposes in which no more than one-third [1/3] of the changing light source is off at any time.)
6. Freestanding Sign: A sign not attached to or forming part of a building.
7. Incidental Sign: A small nonelectric information sign four (4) square feet or less in area which pertains to goods, products, services, or facilities which are available on the premises where the sign occurs and intended primarily for the convenience of the public while on the premises.
8. Individual Business: One business on one parcel (or parcels under the same ownership).
9. Interchange Corridor: The area 1500 feet prior to the ingress and egress points east and west bound for the City on the I-90 right-of-way.
10. Interstate 90 Corridor: That portion delineated as being 250 feet beyond either side of the I-90 right-of-way that is between the east and west boundaries of the City.

# **SIGNAGE STANDARDS**

(page 2)

11. Low Intensity Lighting: Lighting not exceeding the equivalent of eight hundred (800) milliamperes\* fluorescent tubing space on nine-inch (9) centers, or of exposed neon not exceeding thirty (30) milliamperes. \*(approximately equal to a 100 watt bulb)
12. Monument Sign: A free standing sign and supporting structure constructed as a solid structure or one which gives the appearance of a continuous, non-hollow, unbroken, mass.
13. Multiple Businesses: Multiple businesses include businesses that may be located in a single building or in multiple buildings on a single site.
14. On-Premise Sign: A sign which carries advertisements incidental to a lawful use of the premises on which it is located, including signs indicating the business transacted at, services rendered, goods sold or produced on the premises, name of the business and/or name of the person, firm or corporation occupying the premises.
15. Portable Sign: Any sign which is not permanently affixed and is designed for or capable of being moved, except those signs explicitly designed for people to carry on their person.
16. Private Off-premises Directional Sign: a permanently installed sign that provides directional information to business(es) located within the City of Liberty Lake, but not located on the same parcel as the business(es).
17. Readerboard: A sign face consisting of tracts to hold readily changeable letters allowing frequent changes of copy.
18. Roof Sign: A sign supported by and erected on and/or above a roof, wall or parapet of a building or structure.
19. Sign: Any visual communication device, structure or fixture which is visible from any right-of-way and is intended to aid the establishment in question in promoting the sale of products, goods, services, events or to identify a building using graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademarks or written copies. Painted wall designs or patterns, which do not represent a product, service or registered trademark or which do not identify the user, shall not be considered signs. If a design or pattern is combined with a sign, only that part of the design or pattern, which cannot be distinguished from the sign, will be considered as part of the sign. This definition does not include billboards or video boards.
20. Support Structure(s): Posts or columns and their anchors and bolts that structurally support the sign attached to it.
21. Video Board: Video board or moving picture board/screen is a large format display showing active or moving or animated images over most or all of the display surface and which has advertising images that are discernible from a moving vehicle on a public right of way.
22. Wall Sign: A nonpaper sign attached or erected parallel to and extending not more than fifteen (15) inches from the facade or face of any building to which it is attached and supported throughout its entire length, with the exposed face of the sign parallel to the plane of said wall or facade. Signs incorporated into mansard roofs, marquees, or canopies shall be treated as wall signs.

## **Signs Exempt from Building Permit Requirement**

The following shall not require a building permit provided that these exemptions shall not be construed as relieving the owner from the responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code or any other law or ordinance, including the Uniform Building Code. These signs may require a temporary permit.

- a. Signs that are attached to buildings provided such signs are not more than four (4) sq. ft. in area and project not more than 2 inches from any building surface.
- b. The changing of the advertising copy or message on a lawfully erected sign, readerboard or similar sign specifically designed for replaceable copy.
- c. Painting, repainting or normal maintenance, unless a structural or electrical change is made.
- d. Temporary banners and temporary signs as permitted herein.
- e. Real estate signs as permitted herein.
- f. Incidental signs.
- g. Temporary political signs.
- h. Any sign located within a building not visible from the street or sidewalk.

## **Prohibited Signs**

The following signs are prohibited in all zones unless otherwise specifically permitted.

1. Signs, which by coloring, lighting, shape, wording or location resemble or conflict with traffic control signs or devices.
2. Signs that create a safety hazard for pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
3. Flashing signs.

# **SIGNAGE STANDARDS**

(page 3)

4. Flashing or neon lighting used as an alternative to signage.
5. Portable signs exceeding six (6) square feet.
6. Readerboards signs (except as permitted herein).
7. All freestanding electronically changeable message signs.
8. Signs attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer parked on public or private property, provided that this provision shall not be construed as prohibiting the identification of a firm or its product on a vehicle operating during the normal course of business. Franchised buses and taxis are exempt from these provisions.
9. Roof signs.
10. Freestanding Signage with unconcealed poles supports.
11. Video Boards.
12. Billboards.
13. Signs attached to towers or wireless communication support towers.
14. Inflatable signs.
15. A-frame signs.
16. Bench signs.
17. Signage in residential areas (except as permitted herein).
18. Temporary signage (except as permitted herein).

## **Examples of Prohibited Signs:**



## **Signs Permitted in All Zones in Connection with Specific Uses**

The following signs may be permitted in any zone, subject to the limitations as provided herein.

### **1. Bulletin Boards:**

Bulletin boards may be permitted on the premises of public, charitable or religious institutions, subject to the following:

- a. Such sign shall contain not more than thirty-two (32) square feet in area on a face and may be double-faced.
- b. No part of the sign shall exceed a height of six (6) feet above the grade.
- c. The sign, if lighted, shall use low-intensity lighting.

### **2. Temporary Residential or Office Building Signs:**

A temporary real estate sign advertising the prospective sale or lease of a group of lots, dwellings, apartments, or office spaces within a property shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:

- a. The sign shall be located on the premises being sold or leased.
- b. The sign area shall not exceed thirty two (32) square feet in area on a face and may be double-faced and no higher than six (6) feet above grade of the lot or parcel on which the sign is located.
- c. The banner sign shall be flush mounted to the building wall surface below the roof eave and oriented to minimize visual exposure to existing residential areas.
- d. The sign shall be non-illuminated.
- e. The sign shall remain only as long as property remains unsold or un-leased for a period not to exceed one (1) year. The Planning and Community Development Director may extend the one (1) year time period upon written request by the owners/developers of the project.

# **SIGNAGE STANDARDS**

(page 4)

## **3. Permanent Residential Subdivision or Area Name**

### **Signs:**

Decorative subdivision or area name signs of a permanent character at the street entrance or entrances to the subdivision or area which identifies the name of the subdivision or area only, shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:

- a. The sign shall be designed to achieve aesthetic harmony with the identifying neighborhood and consist of decorative masonry walls, concrete, rock or wood with illuminated, indirectly lighted or non-illuminated name plates or letters, and be located in a maintained landscaped area.

## **4. Temporary Banners, Flags, Pennants and Searchlights:**

- a. A banner, flag or pennant may be permitted for by the Planning and Community Development Director for temporary on-premises use not exceeding thirty (30) days, provided that such display does not have an adverse impact on nearby residences or institutions.
- b. A searchlight may be permitted by the Planning and Community Development Director for temporary on-premises use only not exceeding three (3) days, provided that such display does not have an adverse impact on nearby residences or institutions.

## **5. Construction Site Signs:**

One on premises construction sign that identifies the future use of a site, architects, engineers, contractors, financial institutions, and other individuals or firms involved with the construction of a project, but not including advertisement of any products, during the actual construction period and removed prior to an occupancy permit being issued. The sign shall be a maximum area of thirty-two (32) square feet and not exceed six (6) feet above grade of the lot or parcel on which the sign is located.

## **6. Real Estate Signs:**

- a. Residential property-Temporary on-premises sign(s) advertising the sale, lease or rental of the building, property or premises, one (1) per frontage road. Such sign(s) shall be unlighted, limited in size to five (5) square feet and limited in height to six (6) feet above grade. A sixteen (16) square foot sign limited in height to six (6) feet above grade is allowed on property of five (5) acres or more, with or without a dwelling on-site.
- b. Open house/directional sign- For (a) and (b) above, an open house/directional sign(s) shall be allowed on the access street to the property. Such sign(s) shall not be placed in such a manner as to interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic, shall only be used when the property is actually open for immediate inspection, shall be unlighted, and shall be limited in size to five (5) square feet and limited in height to three (3) feet above grade.
- c. Commercial/Industrial use or property-Temporary on-premises sign(s) advertising the sale, lease or rental of the building, property or premises, one (1) per frontage road. Such sign(s) shall be unlighted, limited in size to sixteen (16) square feet and limited in height to six (6) feet above grade on sites less than one (1) acre. A thirty two (32) square foot sign limited in height to six (6) feet above grade is allowed on property of one (1) acre or more. Within the Interstate 90 Corridor, on-premises sign shall be limited in size to ninety six (96) square feet and limited in height to sixteen (16) feet.



# SIGNAGE STANDARDS

(page 5)

## Example of a Permitted Sign:

### Real Estate Sign

- Temporary sign advertising a sale of property
- 5 acre + property
- 16 sq. ft. max. size
- 6 ft. max height above grade



## Example of a Permitted Sign:

### Construction Site Sign

- Temporary sign removed prior to occupancy, identifying the future use of a site
- 32 sq. ft. max size
- 6 ft. max height above grade



## Example of a Permitted Sign:

### Temporary Banners, Flags, Pennants and Searchlights

- Temporary use that must be permitted for by the Planning & Community Development Director
- 30 day max use
- Display cannot have an adverse impact on nearby residences or institutions



## Example of a Permitted Sign:

### Permanent Residential Subdivision or Area Name Signs

- Decorative subdivision or area name signs of a permanent character at the street entrance or entrances to the subdivision or area which identifies the name of the subdivision or area only
- Designed to achieve aesthetic harmony with the identifying neighborhood
- Consist of decorative masonry walls, concrete, rock or wood
- Sign must have illuminated, indirectly lighted, or non-illuminated name plates or letters
- Sign must be located in a maintained landscaped area



## Sign Standards in Residential Zones

### (RR-10 through UR-22) Zones

Sign structures are permitted in the residential zones in accordance with the following uses and standards:

1. A nameplate, which indicates no more than the name and address of the occupant of the premises, is permitted, provided that such sign shall not exceed a maximum area of three (3) square feet.
2. Permitted Signs by Use
  - a. The following categories of uses are defined to apply to signage standards provided in Tables 1 and 2 below:
    - Semi-Public uses include a church, public park, multiple-family dwelling, dormitory, fraternity, sorority, nursing home, retirement apartment, public building, child day-care center, family day-care provider, nonprofit community hall or lodge, animal clinic, cemetery, sanitarium.
    - School/Public uses include a school (kindergarten through university), hospital, police station, fire station, post office or public golf course, incinerator, solid waste recycling transfer site, or landfills.
    - Office uses include a business or professional office.
    - Commercial Use/Other shall include commercial uses other than those listed in above and other than home industry or home profession.
  - b. On-Premises wall signs are permitted not to exceed the maximum number and size as shown in Table 1. Wall signs shall be unlighted or have low-intensity lighting, and shall be placed flat against the outside wall of the main building.

TABLE 1 Use	Max # Of Signs	Max Sign Area
Semi-Public	1	10 sq. ft.
Schools/Public Use	1	20 sq. ft.
Office	1*	16 sq. ft.**
Commercial Uses, Other	1	20 sq. ft.

\*Multiple office complexes shall be allowed one wall sign per building.

\*\*An office building containing four (4) or more offices shall be allowed a maximum aggregate sign area of 64 sq. ft.

# SIGNAGE STANDARDS

(page 6)

c. On-Premises monument signs are permitted not to exceed the maximum number, size, and height as shown in Table 2. On-Premises monument signs shall be unlighted or have low-intensity lighting.

TABLE 2 Use	Maximum Number Of Signs	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Sign Height
Semi-Public	1	16 sq. ft.	6 feet
Schools/Public Use	1	32 sq. ft.	6 feet
Office	1	32 sq. ft.	6 feet
Commercial Uses, Other	1	32 sq. ft.	6 feet

## Sign Standards for Business and Industrial Zones

Any sign which pertains only to the identification of a permitted use in the B-1, B-2, B-3, I-2 and I-3 zones and is located entirely on the property with the use or business, is permitted, provided that it complies with the following conditions:

1. Wall Signs – Individual and Multiple Businesses  
Wall signs for businesses are permitted on each wall of a building and for each business located entirely on the property provided the aggregate area for wall signage on any one (1) property or any one (1) building does not exceed a maximum ratio of: 1 square foot of signage per 10 square feet of building façade (sign area: building facade) up to a maximum area of 150 square feet. Except for properties whose principal exposure is from Interstate 90 where 300 square feet shall be the maximum aggregate signage area. In the case of properties with Interstate 90 exposure, the maximum size for signage on walls not facing Interstate 90 shall be 150 square feet.

## 2. Freestanding / Monument Signs – Individual Business

One (1) on-premises freestanding / monument sign for an individual business is permitted, not to exceed the area and height limits as provided in Table 3.

TABLE 3 Zone	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Sign Type
B-1	50 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
B-2/B-3	75 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
I-2/I-3	75 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
B-2/B-3 I-2/I-3*	150 sq. ft.*	30 feet*	freestanding*

\*Parcel is within Interstate 90 Corridor but not within the City's Interchange Corridor.

## 3. Freestanding / Monument Signs – Multiple Businesses

- Freestanding on-premises sign(s) for multiple businesses are permitted, not to exceed the number, maximum area and height limits as provided in Table 4.
- Freestanding signage allowed for an individual business shall not be combined with the signage allowed for multiple businesses
- The minimum separation between signs shall be 200 feet.
- Sign area shall be calculated at one (1) sq. ft. per lineal foot of street frontage up to the maximum area provided in Table 4.

TABLE 4 Zone	Maximum number of signs	Maximum Area Per Sign	Maximum Height	Sign Type
B-1	1	75 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
B-2/B-3	1 per 200' street frontage*	100 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
I-2/I-3	1 per 200' street frontage*	100 sq. ft.	8.5 feet	monument
B-2/B-3 I-2/I-3**	1 per 200' I-90 frontage*	250 sq. ft.**	30 feet**	freestanding

\*One (1) freestanding sign is permitted on parcels with less than 200' of lineal street frontage.

\*\* Parcel is within Interstate 90 Corridor but not within the City's Interchange Corridor.

# SIGNAGE STANDARDS

(page 7)

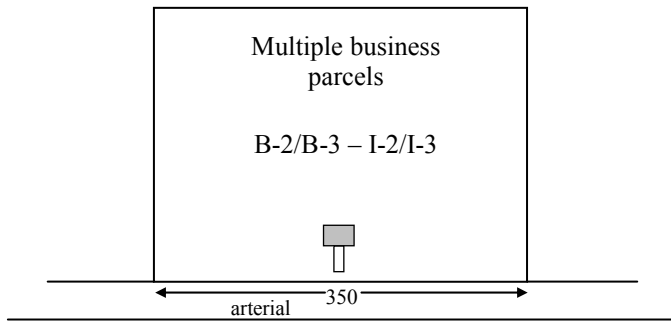


Figure 1 – Example of maximum allowed signage on a parcel with 350 feet of frontage.

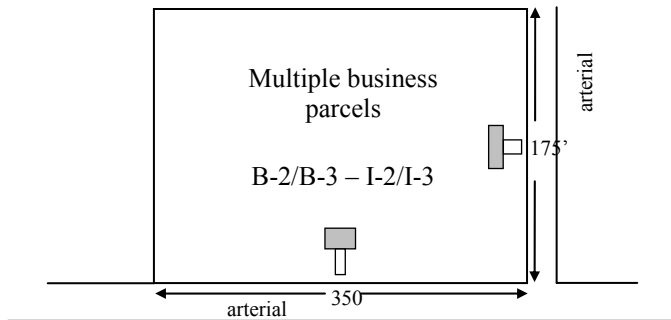


Figure 2 – Example of maximum allowed signage on a parcel with dual frontage.

## Sign Area and Calculation

Sign area is the total area of a sign visible from any one viewpoint or direction, excluding the sign support structure, and its size shall be calculated using the methods described in items 1-4 below.

1. A wall sign shall be calculated by measuring the area created by drawing imaginary straight lines around the entire copy or grouping of such letters, words or symbols, and then multiplying A x B as illustrated in figure 4 below.

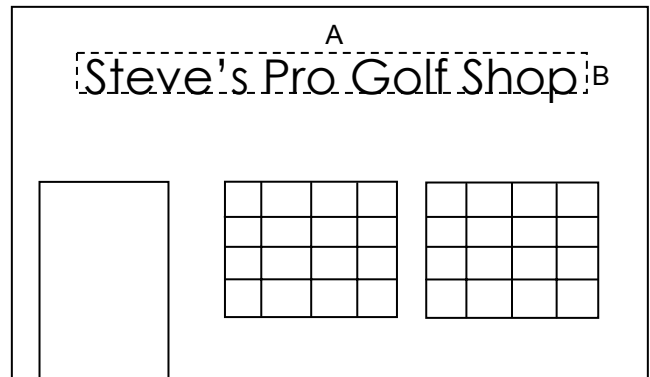


Figure 4

## Sign Standards for Industrial Park (I-1) Zone

A sign in an I-1 zone needs to follow Section 14.630.345 of the Liberty Lake Code that is available at the Planning & Community Development Department (755-6707).

## Sign Location and Setback

1. All signs shall be so located that they:
  - a. Do not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian accessibility or sight distance;
  - b. Conform to the provisions of Section 14.810.020(2) of the Liberty Lake Code, the clear view triangle;
  - c. Do not overhang or are not located in any public right-of-way.
  - d. Comply with any restrictions of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) or Airport Overlay (AO) Zone.
2. All signs shall be located and set back as follows:
  - a. Any portion of a sign (including structural supports) that is higher than three (3) feet above grade shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet back from any public right-of-way.

2. The sign area of a freestanding sign consisting of one sign shall be calculated as shown in Figure 5 below. The sign area of a freestanding sign consisting of more than one (1) sign shall be computed by adding together the total area(s) of all signs as shown in Figure 6 below:

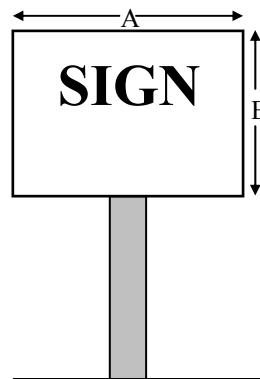


Figure 5

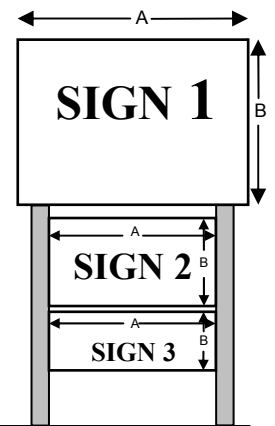


Figure 6

# **SIGNAGE STANDARDS**

(page 8)

3. The sign area for multiple-sided signs shall be calculated as follows:
  - a. The total sign area for a two-sided (back to back) sign shall be calculated using one (1) face, therefore allowing both faces to be of equal size (for example, a two-sided sign has two faces with 18 square feet per side, therefore the sign area is 18 square feet).
  - b. The sign area for a three-sided sign shall be equal to the total area of signage permitted for a two-sided sign, for example, in item 3a above, a two-sided sign is allowed 18 square feet of sign area per side which equals 36 total square feet. If a three-sided sign is used instead of a one-sided or two-sided sign, the three-sided sign may allocate the 36 total square feet among three sides, therefore allowing three sides with 12 square feet per face for a total of 36 square feet of sign area)

## **Maintenance of Signs**

1. Signs that have been approved or that have been issued a permit shall be maintained by the owner or person in possession of the property on which the sign is located. Maintenance shall be such that the signage continues to conform to the conditions imposed by the sign permit.
2. A damaged sign shall be repaired within thirty (30) days.
3. A sign, which has been damaged, to such extent that it may pose a hazard to passersby shall be repaired or removed immediately.

## **Nonconforming Signs**

All nonconforming signs, those that were permanently installed and legally erected prior to the January 15, 2002, shall be allowed to continue until one of the following trigger events. Upon a triggered event the nonconforming sign shall immediately be brought into compliance with these standards. Any nonconforming sign must be brought into conformance in conjunction with the following trigger events:

1. A change in ownership;
2. Tenant improvements modifying 50% or more of the total square footage;
3. Abandonment for greater than 120 days;
4. Damage exceeding 50% of cost for replacement;
5. A change of use that requires signage alteration beyond a simple nonstructural sign face or message change prior to abandonment; or

6. A change in franchised use.

## **Landscaping**

All freestanding and monument signs shall be located in a maintained landscaped area.

## **Sign Illumination**

Internal and external sign illumination shall be of low intensity. External sign illumination shall be down shielded and confined to the sign to minimize impacts to the surrounding area. Illuminated Signs require an electrical permit that is obtainable from the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries 901 N. Monroe, Spokane.....(509) 324-2640 [www.wa.gov/lni](http://www.wa.gov/lni)

## **Required Submittals**

Applications can be obtained from the Planning & Community Development Department. Note: Some signs require a building permit, along with the sign permit (see signs exempt from building permit requirement on page 2 of this brochure). Building permits are also obtained from Planning & Community Development and will be issued with sign permit issuance.

### **Completed & Signed Application**

1. Owner & Contractor Information
  2. Project Description
  3. Site Address / Location, etc.
  4. Sq. Footage of Building Façade
  5. Proposed Sign Type, Area, etc.
  6. Value of Sign
- Plans
    1. Signs
    2. Building Elevations
    3. Setbacks
    4. Site Clearance
  - Site Map
  - Attachment Illustration (for wall signs)
  - Engineering (for freestanding signs)
  - Copy of Electrical Permit (if applicable)

**Please allow 1 - 2 days for sign permit processing.**

For more information or an appointment contact:  
Liberty Lake Planning and Community Development  
1421 N. Meadowwood Lane  
Liberty Lake, WA 99019  
(509) 755-6707